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Communism

Strom Thurmond

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests, and Delegates:

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history."

Never were those words of Abraham Lincoln more appropriate than they are today.

The history of our time has been shaped largely by the national policy and national force of the United States. Whether we like it or not, we are mainly responsible for the shape of the world today—for what we have done, and for what we have not done. We now know, if we did not before, that our responsibility to the world did not end at Nieuw and Tokyo Bay. We must assume the obligations of history—or take the consequences.

Now, no less than during the shooting war, the democratic nations of the earth are under attack. We know this to be true. We cannot, under penalty of national subjection, refuse to recognize this bitter fact. It would be fruitless here to trace the relations of Russia with the other nations of the world. But it has been made all too clear during the past two and a half years that Russia's leaders are the same type of incomplete men whom the Allies met and conquered in Germany, Italy, and Japan. They are incomplete because they must hold power by the rule of the pistol instead of the rule of law. Men of complete faculties do not need fear and the executioner to govern.

Faced by such an enemy, which no longer bothers to mask its intentions, we dare not stop now. In not one single place in the world, outside of their own country, have the Russians sought or desired recovery from the
The Russian policy of obstructionism has been planned with cunning care. The Russians have deliberately muddied the waters so as to fish to their advantage. This has happened in Japan. This has happened in Korea. This has happened all over Central Europe.

We have seen the Russians, through their fiction of "democratic" procedure, make Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Albania into stooge states which equal or surpass in wickedness and evil intent the puppet "protectorates" of Nazi Germany.

We have seen them systematically loot those nations. Russia has not used reparations as reparations. It has used them as an immensely powerful political instrument. It has deliberately eaten up the substance of the nations it occupies. It has deliberately inflated their currencies. It has deliberately exerted every means at its command to hasten economic disaster. This, like everything else the Communists do, has been done with a purpose in mind. It has been done to force the people of those hapless states to expend all of their resources. Then, when they are gone, those unfortunate people are faced with harsh alternatives—Communism or starvation. In order to eat, they must become Communists. Once Communists, they will remain Communists so long as the dictators of Russia ride in the saddle.

We knew long ago that the promised dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 was as phony as any other Russian pledge. We know that the Russians never once thought of abandoning their program to take over the entire world.

We know that in our two major democratic outposts on the continent of Europe—
The Communists have set up underground armies, that those armies are organized in regular military formations and are well-equipped with fighting arms. We know that the Russians have not set up those armies for nothing. When the time comes, they will be used. It is apparent to us all that the time comes near.

Up until now, those nations which have been swept into the maw of Moscow were occupied by Communist troops which were kept there under arms after the war's end exactly for that purpose. The occupied countries fell with an ease and efficiency which may well serve as a Machiavellian lesson to aggressors. Hitler was a fumbling amateur compared to Stalin.

Now comes the crucial test. Scandinavia, Western Europe and China, unoccupied by Russian troops but thoroughly infested with traitors loyal only to the Hammer and Sickle, have been alerted. Events indicate that the battle for those countries must inevitably soon be joined.

The time has long passed when the spectre of Communism haunted only Europe. Now it haunts the entire world.

Well, what then shall be the course of the United States?

We have the depressing knowledge that at least 100,000 citizens of our country, induced by promises of reward, or blackmail, or unbalanced idealism, are Communists. These people are working to overthrow our government. Let no one tell you that they are leftists or liberals; they are the same pure type of Fascists that formed the core of the SS and the Gestapo of Germany. They are not Americans; they are Russian agents.
We must fight these enemies of democracy in the United States, particularly in the labor unions, for the labor unions are the first organizations in any nation which the Communists seek to control. In the larger picture, we have been brought to the abrupt realization that we are compelled to go further afield. We must fight Communism in Europe and Asia if we are to keep it from overwhelming the United States by force.

One fact has become as undeniable as a kick in the teeth. That is, that the rulers of Russia regard the United States as their most dangerous enemy. Their course of action has been based upon that assumption.

Nothing we have said or done in our sincere efforts to bring peace to the world, has changed that belief. Nothing we can say or do will change that belief. The effect is the same as if we were their most dangerous enemy.

I for one am ready to accept the Russian evaluation of us.

Let us admit that Russia has compelled us to become an open enemy.

Let us admit that Russia has become our most dangerous enemy.

Let us base our plans on that fact, come what may.

The time for half-hearted measures is long past.

Europe, Asia, and then North America. The picture looks grim. But it cannot be painted too grimly. The United States stands forth as the only nation with enough resources to break the march of Communism. We are able. But are we ready and willing? We must be.

How best can we beat Communism? Let us demand of our government first-rate national preparedness and military research. For the Russians, no
less than did the Axis powers, respect force, nothing else. Let us also profit by a lesson we learned before and during the war. This is to use money, wherever we can, as an instrument of national policy. But if money is not sufficient, let us be fully prepared to use all necessary means.

The time has arrived to make an historical decision. The plans of the Communists have been advanced so far that more than money and goods will probably be required.

Many of you who hear me today have seen personally the desperate shape of the nations of Europe which are outside of the Russian occupation zone. When countries are hungry, exhausted, and can see no means of salvation—when they know very well that Red Army operations orders for their occupation have undoubtedly already been written—they cannot keep up their hearts by drawing sustenance from promises. They must have real help. We, in a moral sense, as well as a sense of self-preservation, have an obligation to history and to ourselves to help them. We are the only nation which can help them. If we do not, we will hand them over to Russia as gifts. Never before have we ever needed allies as much as we do in these perilous years of our generation.

For the past two and a half years, we—-we Americans—have been the main reason why Russia has not seized Europe and Asia. We must now realize that increased efforts are called for, and we must firmly determine not to shirk our destiny. You cannot hypnotize an automaton with fine words; you cannot bluff a gangster who holds a tommygun.
One reason why America has become great is because Americans have always had their eyes fixed on the main chance. Our main chance now is to throw our full support behind the still-free democracies. The best minds of this country have arrived at the conclusion that our best chance of avoiding war is the European Recovery Plan to help the democracies of Europe help themselves. To those who would be shocked at the cost, let me say that another war would be a thousand times more costly in money alone. I, like all of you, would hate to see veterans of a third World War. But I would rather see such veterans than a nation of slaves.

We have fought two wars to keep Germany from controlling Europe. We do not want to fight another to keep Russia from controlling it. But if we do not put our money to work to save Western Europe there is not the slightest doubt that we will have to fight the third World War or surrender, and surrender is not in the American blood.